

Alberta Finance Economic Bulletin

Economic Statistics Released During the Week of April 19, 2004 to April 23, 2004

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Consumer Price Index (1992=100)	March			Canada's annual inflation rate was unchanged at 0.7% in March, equalling the smallest annual increase since December 2001. Energy prices declined 4.1% on an annual basis. Excluding energy, the annual CPI inflation rate was 1.2%, up 0.1 percentage point from February. The slight increase in non-energy inflation was attributable, in part, to higher prices for homeowners insurance (+10.8%), tuition (+8.1%) and cigarettes (+7.8%). Alberta's annual CPI inflation rate declined 0.6 percentage points in March, to 0.1%, due largely to declining energy prices. Excluding energy, Alberta's CPI inflation rate stood at 1.4%. Alberta's annual inflation rate has recorded declines in 14 of the past 16 months.
Alberta	130.3	0.3%	0.1%	
Canada	123.6	0.3%	0.7%	
New Motor Vehicle Sales	February			New motor vehicle sales in Canada increased 7.7% in February, the second consecutive monthly increase. The rise was fuelled by strong sales of trucks, vans and buses (+13.8%), supported by a smaller increase in sales of passenger cars (+2.5%). New truck sales accounted for more than 80% of the total monthly increase in sales. Alberta's new motor vehicle sales increased 9.7% in February. The strongest monthly gains in sales were reported in Saskatchewan (+29.3%) and Manitoba (+13.8%).
Alberta	16,209	9.7%	-5.3%	
Canada	128,043	7.7%	-12.1%	
Canadian Composite Leading Index (1992=100)	March			Led by a strengthening manufacturing sector, the Canadian Composite Leading Index increased 0.7% in March. New manufacturing orders were up 2.9% from February levels. Household demand was mixed in March, as a 0.7% increase in furniture and appliance sales was offset by a 1.7% decrease in sales of other durable goods. The Housing index was up 1.1% on a monthly basis, as a result of gains for both new and existing housing. The Composite Leading Index was up 6.3% over the same period in 2003.
	192.0	0.7%	6.3%	